

(a) whether the inflation rate has been going up recently;

(b) the rise in rate of inflation in the first few weeks of 1987-88;

(c) whether this is more than what it was on 1986-87; and

(d) the main reasons for such steep rise in the rate of inflation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B.K. GADHVI): (a) to (c). The rate of inflation in terms of W.P.I. during the 16 weeks of the current financial year ending 18th July, 1987 (latest available) was 5.5 per cent as against 5.1 per cent in the corresponding period of 1986-87.

(d) The pressure on prices at this time of the year has been mainly caused by seasonal factors, and has been aggravated by the weak monsoon. The position is being kept under careful watch.

Permission to Indian companies for purchase of technology from abroad

1597. SHRI KRISHNA SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been considering to grant permission to Indian Companies to purchase technology from companies abroad; and

(b) if so, Government's decision thereon, indicating the norms and guidelines to be adopted by Government in permitting such technology imports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT; ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b). Indian companies can purchase technology from abroad on a selective basis where need has been

established, technology does not exist within the country and the time taken to generate technology indigenously would delay the achievements of the development targets.

The principles governing the acquisition of technology also specify that there shall be a firm commitment for absorption, adaptation and subsequent development of imported knowhow through adequate investments and Research & Development to which importers of technology will be expected to contribute.

Foreign Exchange Sanctioned under Foreign Travel Scheme

1598. SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether under Foreign Travel Scheme both currency and travellers cheques are made available to a traveller going abroad;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to amend the system and provide entire foreign exchange in currency?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The basic reasons for not releasing the entire amount of foreign exchange in the form of currency notes and coins are:-

(i) Unlike travellers cheques, currency notes and coins can be misused; and

(ii) Availability of limited stocks of notes and coins with Authorised Dealers.

(c) No, Sir.